

COUNTRY: Lithuania

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CIA

SUBJECT: Town of Kedainiai

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2. Kedainiai was a small town of approximately 10,000 inhabitants. It was built around the old Evangelical Reformed Church (16th century) and grew in a irregular fashion. New additions to the town, which started in 1939, were systematically constructed. The streets of the old town were crooked and narrow and were seldom lit. There were only two main streets.
3. Most of the houses were constructed of wood with a few of brick and stone. The houses were not numbered. All were of one floor and were not painted. The older houses had wooden roofs while several of the newer houses had sheet metal roofs. Most of the houses contained one or two rooms, the well-to-do, of course, had larger accommodations. Approximately half of the town's people owned their homes, the other half rented quarters. The town had no water supply system and most of the toilet facilities were located outside. However, several of the new homes had bathrooms or showers. The homes were lighted by electricity and wood was the principal fuel used for heating and cooking. A new hospital was constructed in 1938.
4. All of the inhabitants were Lithuanian citizens. During the first Soviet occupation, they, of course, lost their citizenship. The ethnic minorities were about 10% Jewish and 3% Polish. Eighty-eight per cent of the inhabitants were Roman Catholic, 10% Jewish and 2% various other religions.
5. The railroad station was located about two miles from town. It was known as the Kedainiai railroad station. It was of masonry construction, three stories high, and painted white. A separate building served as warehouse and freight station. Kedainiai was served by a single track, one line railroad, that went east to Radviliskis and west to

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6. The town had no airport, although in 1940 the Soviets began construction of an airport a few miles south of town. The Nevežys River flowed through the town but was not suitable for navigation. There were no busses or streetcars, just a few taxis and a few private limousines. Although Kedainiai was the county seat for the Kedainiai Apskritis (District), the town had no city hall, town hall, or police station. All vital statistics were registered in Kaunas.
7. There were no factories or mines in Kedainiai. Most of the town's inhabitants earned their living in agriculture and a few in small businesses. There were very few individual radio receivers in Kedainiai. The population listened to the radio over public loudspeakers. Sets that were available were very expensive.
8. It was extremely difficult for a new arrival to find a place to live. Because the town had only a few small hotels, a stranger could easily be spotted.
9. Kedainiai had an intermediate school for boys and girls, a gymnasium, and the Kulturtechnic (agricultural) School. The Soviet Air Force took over the latter for its own purposes. There were no theaters or concert halls and only one movie house showed Lithuanian, German, and French films. There was one large park which was located in the suburbs. The Kulturtechnic School buildings were in this area. These were very beautiful large stone buildings. The principal athletic activities were soccer and basketball. There were no historical buildings or forts.
10. Army barracks were located in the center of town and once housed an artillery regiment.

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